DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 029 043 TE 001 394

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An Experimental Composition Program for Prospective Secondary School Teachers. Interim Report.

Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center in the Preparation of Secondary English Teachers (ISCPET), Urbana.
Spons Agency-Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
Report No-HE-145
Bureau No-BR-5-0789
Pub Date Sep 68
Contract-OEC-5-10-029
Note-28p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.50
Descriptors-College Freshmen, *Composition (Literary), Composition Skills (Literary), Course Evaluation, *Curriculum Evaluation, Education Majors, *English Curriculum, English Education, English Instruction, English Programs, Experimental Curriculum, Secondary School Teachers, Student Evaluation, *Teacher Education Curriculum, Writing Skills

This study, undertaken at Bradley University (Peoria, Illinois), sought to determine the comparative effects on writing skills and knowledge of students in two different sequences of English composition: (1) two semesters taken the freshman year, English 101-102, and (2) one semester taken the freshman year and one semester the junior year, English 101-300. An evaluation of the adequacy of the 101-300 sequence as composition preparation for teaching English in the secondary school was made concurrently in the study. Results of a standardized composition test, theme analyses, and evaluations by composition instructors showed slightly greater, but not statistically significant, gains in writing proficiencies in the 101-300 sequence than in the 101-101 sequence. Greater maturity and ability in analyzing, organizing, and expressing complex ideas were shown by students completing the 101-300 sequence which provides the added benefit of a review of writing principles and practice at the upper-class level. However, the level of achievement in writing skills and knowledge shown by English-Education majors in English 300 indicates that additional composition requirements are needed to provide more than minimal qualifications for teaching English in the secondary school. (Author(LH)

ED029043

INTERIM REPORT

USOE Project Number HE-145

USOE Contract Number OE-5-10-029

ISCPET Subcontract Number SS-2-21-66

ILLINOIS STATE-WIDE CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER IN THE PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS (ISCPET)

An Experimental Composition Program for Prospective Secondary School English Teachers

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

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An Experimental Composition Program for Prospective Secondary School English Teachers

June Snider
Bradley University
Peoria, Illinois

September 1968

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and to a subcontract with the Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center in the Preparation of Secondary School English Teachers, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. Contractors and subcontractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the projects. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

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FOREWORD

In April, 1965, Bradley University undertook several Special Research Studies for the Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center in the Preparation of Secondary School English Teachers. When the Special Studies began, the official Bradley University Institutional Representatives to ISCPET, under the general direction of Professor J. N. Hook of the University of Illinois, were Professors William L. Gillis and W. F. Elwood. Also, Professor Gillis served as the Investigator for the Special Research Studies.

In March, 1968, because of poor health, Professor Gillis submitted his resignation to ISCPET as Institutional Representative and Investigator for the Bradley-ISCPET Special Research Studies. Shortly thereafter, Professor Paul Sawyer became Bradley University's representative to ISCPET, and Mrs. June Snider became the Investigator for the Special Research Studies.

Because so much of the actual research time had passed when Mrs. Snider accepted her position, her primary tasks have been the completion of the studies, the analyses of the data, and the preparation of the final reports. "An Experimental Composition Program for Prospective Secondary School English Teachers," which studied the validity of a minimal composition program for students entering a career of English teaching if the students study composition at the optimum time, is the first of the two Bradley-ISCPET Special Research Studies to be completed by Mrs. Snider.

The Executive Committee of the Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center in the Preparation of Secondary School English Teachers wishes to acknowledge its appreciation to Mrs. June Snider for accepting and meeting the challenge of learning the past details of this Study, completing the Study on schedule, and preparing the final report.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In the early 1960's the national outcry that Johnny could not read or write was echoed by college English department faculty who condemned Johnny's freshman English themes for his ignorance of spelling, grammar, diction, sentence structure, and punctuation--ignorance of the basic mechanics and fundamental process of writing.

It was easy and perhaps natural to blame Johnny, first of all, and then the high school English teacher for the sad state of literacy in high school and even college graduates. But gradually the pointing finger revolved full circle to encompass college English departments and colleges of education in the blame for Johnny's illiteracy.

Faced with the task of teaching clear and effective writing to college freshmen who lacked not only basic mechanics but the rudiments of exposition, argumentation, and clear expression of ideas in written composition, college English departments were forced to examine their existing, traditional freshman composition programs in light of the changing needs and abilities of students caught in the midst of an increasingly complex and demanding society. They were also, finally, forced to examine their curriculums as effective preparation for Johnny's English teacher.

The resulting outgrowth of studies, surveys, curriculum committees, and utilization of new research methods has contributed to a fruitful analysis of the problems of teaching English in today's classroom.

Freshman composition classes at Bradley University posed many of the problems confronting other colleges and universities in the early 1960's. Increasing enrollments and the concomitant burgeoning sections of freshman English composition strained the resources of the English department in providing faculty to teach the required English courses.

Some faculty members questioned the necessity of two semesters of freshman composition which seemed repetitious to some extent and often boring to the student. The effectiveness of the program was also questioned because many students apparently failed to retain writing skills acquired in the two one-semester freshman courses and were unable to meet college standards in writing during their junior and senior years.

A committee of Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty was established in 1964 to study means of meeting composition needs of entering freshmen and upper-class students as well.

Part of the problem considered by the committee in studying the question of changing the requirement of two semesters of freshman English was the demonstrated lack of writing ability on the part of many freshmen. At the same time, the need for reinforcement of writing skills during the junior and senior years was considered. The apparent deterioration of writing abilities of students in later college years, discussed by Kitzhaber in Themes, Theories, and Therapy, was instrumental in the recommendation that the second semester of composition be given during the junior year rather than during the second semester of the freshman year.

The decision establishing English 300 in place of English 102 as a composition requirement for Liberal Arts and Sciences students became effective in the 1965-66 school year.

Concurrently with the study of the freshman composition program, the Bradley English Department began an examination of their preparatory curriculum for prospective secondary school English teachers in conjunction with the Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center for Preparation of Secondary School English Teachers.

With the establishment of the English 101-300 sequence, an ISCPET Special Research Study was begun to determine the effectiveness of the new sequence in preparing students to teach composition without additional required composition courses.

B. Description of the Bradley University English Composition Program

English 101 is a three-hour freshman requirement for all students in the University. English 102 is a three-hour freshman requirement for all students not in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. English 300 is a three-hour requirement for all Liberal Arts students and is taken the junior year.

Transfer students in Liberal Arts are also required to take English 300 even though they have completed six hours of composition at another school. Non-Liberal Arts students may take English 300 as an elective.

An advanced composition course, English 500, is required of graduate students in English and is open as an elective to seniors and qualified juniors.

There are two main differences between the English 101-102 sequence and the 101-300 sequence. One difference is the time interval between the two halves of the composition requirement for Liberal Arts students; the other is in course content and emphasis.

English 101 stresses the fundamental principles and techniques of writing with practice in writing themes related to readings in literature. English 102 continues the study of clear and effective writing with emphasis on argumentative writing. Themes are related to readings in literature for the most part.

English 300 reviews the principles of composition, but emphasis is on the writing of long, relatively sophisticated themes, both expository and argumentative, drawn from knowledge and ideas related to the student's major field.

Textbooks for the three courses are listed in Appendix A.

C. Objectives and Hypothesis

The objectives of this study are twofold. The first is to evaluate the 101-300 sequence as a means of providing college-level competency in writing skills to meet the needs of students throughout their college years and in their professional fields without adding to the existing composition requirement. The second objective is to determine the validity of the hypothesis that a minimal composition program of six semester hours is adequate preparation for students entering a career of English teaching, if the students study composition at the optimum time.

II METHOD

As a standardized measurement of writing skills and knowledge, the Educational Testing Service Composition Test, Form NPL, was given to students completing the 101-102 sequence and the 101-300 sequence. Three sections of English 102 and three sections of English 300 were tested in the final week of the academic year in which the second half of the 101-300 sequence first became effective.

Sections tested included 50 students in English 300 representing 33% of the course enrollment and 55 students in English 102 representing 10% of the course enrollment.

Many factors made it difficult to measure the effect of the 101-300 sequence on specific English-Education majors who had been scattered throughout the many sections of English 101 in their freshman year and also in varying sections of English 300. Because of the variables of different instructors and, in the case of transfer students, different backgrounds in freshman English, the scores of all Liberal Arts students taking the ETS Composition Test were used as a basis for judging the effect of the 101-300 sequence on the writing skills and knowledge of the English-Education majors.

In order to establish the relative writing abilities of students at the beginning of each sequence and to determine relative gains in each sequence, mean scores in the ETS Composition Test were correlated with mean scores in the College Entrance Examination Board Scholastic Aptitude Verbal Test for students in each group.

Although studies have shown a relationship between performance in standardized tests and the ability to write, according to Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbook (Ref. 1), further evaluation of the comparative writing skills and knowledge of students in the two sequences was made by analyzing themes. Themes written at the beginning and end of English 102 and the beginning and end of English 300 by six students of varying ability in each sequence were selected for analysis. CEEB verbal scores, showing writing skills and knowledge prior to the beginning of either sequence, and English 101 grades for the 12 students whose themes were analyzed were used to show comparable writing abilities between the two groups.

In order to evaluate the 101-300 sequence as a minimal requirement for preparation for teaching composition, themes in the English 300 group were selected from English-Education majors.

Analyses of the themes were made by the student's class instructor and one other instructor with both college and high school teaching experience.

Critiques of the themes included enumeration of errors in spelling, punctuation and mechanics, grammar, diction, sentence structure, and

paragraphing. The themes were also rated in five elements of composition: vocabulary and semantics, clarity, organization, development of thesis, and content. The ratings of (1) above average, (2) average, and (3) below average were based on criteria of knowledge and skill in written composition established by ISCPET in "Qualifications of Secondary School Teachers of English: A Preliminary Statement." (Ref. 2)

Measurement of the residual effect of the 101-300 sequence on actual classroom teaching was not possible because the second half of the three-year sequence came into effect during the 1967-68 academic year for the first time. Freshmen who entered when the sequence first came into being in 1965 have just completed their junior year (and the 300 course) and have not yet had teaching experience.

To determine the views of faculty members involved in the two sequences as to the comparative merits and student abilities in the two sequences, questionnaires were given to instructors who had taught English 300 in addition to English 101 and 102.

The questionnaire asked the instructor to rate the proficiency of students at the beginning and at the end of English 300 as (A) discernibly lower than 102 students, (B) having no discernible difference between 102 students, or (C) discernibly higher than 102 students. Ratings were given in five fundamental areas of composition and five categories of overall writing ability. (Table 5, p. 11)

The instructor was also asked to comment on the advisability of continuing English 101-300 as a Liberal Arts and Sciences requirement and on the adequacy of the sequence as preparation for teaching English. A choice of three appraisals of the adequacy of the sequence as teacher preparation was given: (1) English 101-300 adequate training, (2) additional composition course desirable but not mandatory, or (3) English 101-300 not adequate training.

III. RESULTS

A. Test Results

As a measurement of the comparative levels of writing skills and knowledge of students completing English 102 and those completing English 300, the mean raw scores on the ETS Composition Test, Form NPL, were computed for students tested in each course.

The results of the test showed a slightly higher, but not significantly higher, raw scores mean for English 300 students than for English 102 students. Correlation of the converted ETS scores mean and SATV scores mean for each group showed a slightly greater, but not significantly greater, difference in the two means for the English 300 students, indicating slightly greater gains in achievement in the 101-300 sequence than in the 101-102 sequence. Test data are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.--ETS Composition Test results correlated with SATV scores

	N	ETS Test Scores Mean	SATV Scores Mean	Converted ETS Scores Mean	Difference Scores Mean
English 102	55	44.45	476.89	492.90	16.25
		*	*	*	*
English 300	50	45.48	517.95	538.81	18.74

*Differences in mean scores between the two groups were not statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence.

An itemized computation of responses for each group showed the comparative writing skills and knowledge in three general testing areas: (A) questions 1-39, grammar, (B) questions 40-67, tone, diction, semantics, and grammar, and (C) questions 68-100, paragraph structure and organization.

Because the number of students tested in each group differed, percentages of correct answers out of the total possible correct answers in each section were figured for each group to show comparisons in testing areas (A), (B), and (C), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2.--Comparative achievement levels in three testing areas of the ETS Composition Test

Test Area	Percentages of Correct Answers	
	English 102	English 300
A. Grammar	62.7	63.4
B. Tone, diction, semantics, and grammar	55.0	52.7
C. Paragraph structure and organization	38.1	45.7

While no significant differences in percentage totals are shown between students completing the two courses in areas A and B, the English 300 students scored 7.6% more correct answers in area C, paragraph structure and organization, than English 102 students.

B. Findings of Theme Analyses

The analyses of themes were charted to show the number of errors in five classifications and the ratings of the themes in five categories of composition proficiency. (See Tables 3 and 4, p. 8-9.)

Comparison of errors by individual students showed that weaknesses in grammar, spelling, punctuation and mechanics, and sentence structure did not change appreciably between beginning and ending themes. Neither did error totals in the various classifications differ to any extent between students in English 102 and English 300.

In the five categories of overall writing ability, proficiency ratings showed no appreciable change between beginning and ending themes or between students in the two sequences, although gains in the classification of paragraphing and in organization were shown by students in both sequences.

Total errors and proficiency ratings for beginning themes of English 300 students did not indicate any visible deterioration of writing skills and knowledge in the interval between the freshman and junior courses.

As a basis for evaluating the adequacy of the six-hour English 101-300 sequence for teacher preparation in composition, the theme analyses of six English-Education majors completing English 300 indicated various weaknesses in fundamentals, particularly in spelling (3.51 errors per 1000 words) and in punctuation and mechanics (4.17 errors per 1000 words). Proficiency ratings in all categories for final themes totaled 11 above average, 15 average, and 4 below average ratings. (See Table 4.)

Table 3.--Analyses of themes of English 102 students

Theme identity: A indicates beginning theme; B - ending theme

	1-A	1-B	2-A	2-B	3-A	3-B	4-A	4-B	5-A	5-B	6-A	6-B	Errors per 1000 words All Themes
Words in theme	1000	660	540	720	390	480	570	420	264	490	560	610	
Errors:													
Spelling	2	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	2	2	2.53
Grammar	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	.89
Punct. & Mechanics	8	7	7	3	4	5	3	1	2	2	6	5	7.90
Sentence Structure	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	.45
Para-graphing	1	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	1.49

Proficiency rating: 1-above average; 2-average; 3-below average

Diction & Semantics	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3
Clarity	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	3
Thesis de-velopment	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3
Organiza-tion	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	2
Content	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	3
CEEB Ver-bal Scores	657		600		479		443		441		417	
English 101 Grade	B		B		B		B		C		B	

Table 4.--Analyses of themes of English 300 students (Engl.-Educ. majors)

Theme identity: A indicates beginning theme; B - ending theme

	1-A	1-B	2-A	2-B	3-A	3-B	4-A	4-B	5-A	5-B	6-A	6-B	Errors per 1000 words All themes
Words in theme	440	770	550	570	425	450	*	440	*	1160	510	650	
Errors: Spelling	1	3	3	2	1	3		1		0	4	3	3.51
Grammar	0	0	2	0	2	1		0		0	2	4	1.84
Punct. & Mechanics	0	2	1	2	1	2		2		9	5	1	4.17
Sentence Structure	0	0	0	1	0	0		1		2	1	2	1.17
Para-graphing	0	1	2	1	1	0		2		4	3	3	2.84

Proficiency rating: 1-above average; 2-average; 3-below average

Diction & Semantics	1	1	1	2	1	2		2		3	2	2
Clarity	1	1	1	2	2	2		2		2	2	3
Thesis de-velopment	2	1	1	1	1	2		1		2	3	3
Organiza-tion	1	1	2	2	2	1		1		2	2	2
Content	2	2	1	1	2	2		1		1	2	3
CEEB Ver-bal Scores	651		585		527		514		431		413	
English 101 Grade	B		D		B		C		C		C	
English 300 Grade	A		B		B		B		C		C	

*Themes not available

Proficiency rating totals for final themes in all categories (English-Educ. majors):

11 above average
15 average
4 below average

C. Faculty Questionnaire Results

Six of the eight instructors who have taught English 300 responded to the questionnaire. Their teaching experience in English 101 and 102, in addition to the English 300 course, included 15 years, 8 years, 7 years, 3 years, and 1 year.

Their responses comparing the writing abilities of English 300 students with English 102 students at the beginning and at the end of each course are shown in Table 5 (p. 11).

Respondents were asked to rate English 300 students in comparison to English 102 students as (A) discernibly lower, (B) having no discernible difference, or (C) discernibly higher in ten categories of writing skills and knowledge.

Total ratings in the ten categories of abilities of English 300 students at the beginning of the semester included 3 (A) ratings, discernibly lower, 23 (B) ratings, having no discernible difference, and 28 (C) ratings, discernibly higher. Total ratings for English 300 students at the end of the semester included O (A) ratings, 14 (B) ratings, and 46 (C) ratings.

Of respondents who commented on the desirability of continuing the 101-300 sequence as a Liberal Arts and Sciences requirement, three believed it desirable, one believed it very desirable, and one was in favor of continuing the course with modifications.

Asked to appraise the English 101-300 sequence as adequate training in composition for students preparing to teach English in secondary schools, two respondents expressed the opinion that the sequence was adequate, one respondent believed an additional course desirable but not mandatory, and two respondents said the course was not adequate training.

Table 5.--Faculty appraisals of writing abilities of students in English 300 compared to students in English 102

Ratings:
A - 300 students discernibly lower than 102 students
B - no discernible difference between 300 and 102 students
C - 300 students discernibly higher than 102 students

	Ratings by six instructors					
	Beginning Of Semester			End of Semester		
	A	B	C	A	B	C
Grammar	1	A-B* 1 | 2	2		1	5
Punctuation, mechanics, spelling	1	A-B | 2	2		1	5
Sentences: structure, clarity complexity	1	A-B | 2	3		1	5
Paragraphs: use of transitions, unity, effective development	1	A-B | 4	1		1	5
Development of thesis: organization, effective beginning and ending, adequate content	1	A-B | 2	3		1	5
Creativity: original thought, imagery, approach to assignments	1	1	4		2	4
Overall ability, expository paper		3	3		1	5
Overall ability, narrative and descriptive papers		2	4		1	5
Overall ability, argumentative paper	1	2	3		3	3
Ability to find his own errors, edit and revise		3	3		2	4
Rating totals	5	A-B* 3 23	28	0	14	46

*Abilities rated between A and B by one instructor

IV. DISCUSSION

Several factors affect the validity and results of this study.

First, it is difficult to accurately measure writing skills and knowledge beyond specific technical errors and general appraisals of clarity and organization, and it is even more difficult to measure a student's preparedness and prospective ability in teaching composition.

A second factor is that the English 101-300 sequence covers a period of three years. It is not possible to judge the effects of other classes, especially English courses, on the student's writing proficiency during the interval between English 101 and 300. It is likely that Liberal Arts students, particularly English majors, are required to do more writing than students in other colleges, such as Engineering or Business. Therefore, both losses and gains in writing skills, over the three-year period, probably differ to some extent between students in the 101-102 sequence and the Liberal Arts 101-300 sequence.

Another variable is that due to the involvement of many different instructors in numerous sections of the two sequences the student's writing proficiency may differ with the effectiveness of the instructor.

However, examination of test results, theme analyses, and faculty questionnaires provide some basis for evaluating the comparative effectiveness of the two sequences.

Although no statistically significant differences were shown by ETS Composition Test scores, slightly higher levels of writing skills and knowledge were shown by students completing the 101-300 sequence than by students completing the 101-102 sequence.

Also, correlations of converted ETS Composition Test scores and SATV scores for students in each sequence showed greater, although not statistically significant, gains in students' writing abilities from the beginning to the end of the 101-300 sequence than in the abilities of those in the 101-102 sequence.

Therefore, it appears that if deterioration of writing ability does take place between the freshman and junior halves of the 101-300 sequence, the gains during the 300 course not only compensate for the loss but produce slightly higher levels of writing skills and knowledge than 101-102.

Results of the theme analyses showed only slight differences between the writing abilities of English 102 and 300 students. Error totals for English 300 themes were slightly higher in all classifications except punctuation and mechanics than for 102 themes, but this may be due to the time-gap in the 101-300 sequence and also to slight differences in beginning abilities of students whose themes were analyzed. Lower grades in English 101 were received by the students in English 300 whose themes were analyzed than by the six students in 102. Also, the number of themes analyzed were probably not sufficient to be wholly representative of the writing proficiency of students in the two courses.

In comparing errors in beginning and ending themes for each student and for each sequence, it is necessary to weigh the number of errors in each classification to the number of words in each theme. However, it is evident that individual weaknesses indicated by error totals in beginning themes were usually repeated in similar totals in the same classification in ending themes. Occasionally more errors were committed in ending than in beginning themes. Neither grammar nor mechanics of writing are taught directly in either course, and it seems apparent that simply marking errors in themes does not achieve measurable improvement even though the student is required to correct all errors. It seems reasonable to assume that he may master some basic rules and mechanics, but as his writing moves from simple patterns into more complex and sophisticated structure, the student may commit errors of a different nature.

In testing the hypothesis that six hours of composition, taken at the optimum time, as in the 101-300 sequence, is a sufficient composition requirement for students preparing to teach English in the secondary school, the study was limited by many factors.

Although results of the ETS Composition Test and faculty questionnaires indicate that the 101-300 sequence is more beneficial to the student and provides slightly higher levels of writing skills and knowledge than the 101-102 sequence, there is not sufficient evidence for determining the adequacy

of the sequence as teacher preparation. Because the first class of juniors to complete the 101-300 sequence have not yet had teaching experience, it was not possible to test the abilities of the English-Education majors in English 300 to teach composition. It is only possible to judge the adequacy of the sequence as teacher preparation according to established criteria and standards of teacher preparation.

"The Proposed Standards for State Approval of Teacher Education," (Ref. 4) prepared by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, states that "advanced composition and provision for a considerable amount of writing throughout the college program" should be included as a fundamental area of study in programs for the preparation of secondary school English teachers.

The 101-300 sequence does not provide "advanced composition" although the sequence is spaced to provide guided and corrected practice in writing in two of the four years of the college program.

"The Proposed Standards..." criteria also include "A fundamental knowledge of the historical development and present character of the English language: phonology (phonetics and phonemics), morphology, syntax, vocabulary (etymology and semantics), and metalinguistics (relations of language and society--for example, usage)" as another fundamental area of study.

The 101-300 sequence is not designed to provide knowledge in the above area. Neither does it teach, except indirectly, methods of teaching composition.

In so far as composition in the secondary school involves the teaching of expression of ideas and the basic principles of writing, the ability ratings of themes of English-Education majors in English 300 showed, for the most part, average or above average proficiency in expressing ideas clearly. However, average college-level proficiency in writing may not provide sufficient strength for effective teaching of composition in the secondary school.

In a Bradley ISCPET Special Research Study involving English 500 (advanced composition), 11 out of 12 graduate students with teaching experience in the secondary school expressed the view that an advanced composition course should be required of all under-graduate students preparing to teach English.

Also, it seems evident from an analysis of ratings of Bradley students and graduates compiled from ISCPET's Illinois Self-Rating Scales for Student English Teachers that preparation for teaching composition demands knowledge in the area of language (not required of Bradley English-Education majors) and additional writing skills and knowledge through advanced composition. Definite weaknesses and some of their lowest ratings were shown in Item 13 of the Self-Rating Scale, "knowledge of theories and history of rhetoric and of the development of English prose," and Item 16, "proficiency in producing writing with considerable strength in characteristics such as relevant content; organization; clarity; appropriateness of tone; and accuracy in mechanics and usage."

In spite of the limitations of the 101-300 sequence in providing adequate preparation for teaching composition, the study shows that both faculty and students feel that definite advantages exist in the 101-300 sequence over the 101-102 sequence. According to evaluations and comments of the English 300 instructors (Appendix B) and students (Appendix C), English 300 provides knowledge of the process of written communication and practice in writing at the time in his college career when the student's needs are greatest for expressing his own ideas and for organizing and analyzing materials in his major field and other classes.

Also, the English 300 student, as a junior and presumably a more knowledgeable and mature student, is better able to express original ideas and is motivated by interest in subjects related to his field and an awareness of the need for skills in written communication. Evidence of this is shown in a sampling of student comments:

"A college freshman is too immature to do any kind of in-depth writing.... A junior has been exposed to different opinions, has developed opinions of his own and also has had to dig for knowledge and ideas."

"English 300 enables the student to review and regain writing ability he may have lost since his freshman year."

One faculty comment summarizes many of the benefits to the student preparing to teach English, "The English-Education majors learn much from the teaching techniques of the instructor, particularly

at the 300 level. I think English 300 offers them more than at the 102 level because many 102 students are still fighting authority, convinced that they know all the answers and that 102 is an imposition. But the student does so much growing between the freshman and junior year, I feel that he gains more from the 300 course because he wants to gain and is better able to gain."

V. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The question of the adequacy of the English 101-300 sequence as a minimal composition requirement for the student preparing to teach English in the secondary school cannot be answered categorically by this study. However, due to the importance of composition as a major and integral part of the whole field of teaching English and the extensive needs for knowledge in the language areas as well as for writing skills, it appears that a minimal requirement of six hours of composition, even when taken at the optimum time, is not sufficient to produce good or superior knowledge and skills for teaching composition.

Test results, findings of theme analyses, questionnaire results, and other study data indicate a need for additional requirements in the areas of structure and usage of language, mechanics of writing, history and development of English language and prose, and advanced composition.

Because diversified and numerous teaching needs in the field of English plus rigid certification requirements in Education place enormous demands on the English-Education major's four-year program, it is difficult to determine priority of needs in establishing new requirements. However, it appears that the English 101-300 requirement provides only minimal composition preparation for teaching English and is not commensurate with composition needs.

If additional teacher-training courses in composition are not required, results of the study indicate that English 101-300 is more valuable than English 101-102 because English 300 comes at a time when the student is better able to master abstract and complex ideas, when the need for writing proficiency is greatest in his college years, and just prior to the student's practice teaching.

In evaluating the comparative effectiveness of the two sequences in providing college-level proficiency in writing to meet needs of students throughout their four-year programs, the study shows that slightly greater gains in knowledge and skills in writing were achieved by students in the 101-300 sequence than in the 101-102 sequence. Test results and questionnaire data showed a greater ability and maturity on the part of the English 300 student in analyzing, organizing, and expressing complex ideas. The timing of the 101-300 sequence also affords definite benefits and advantages to the student by providing a review of the principles of writing and practice in written communication at the upper-class level.

One implication of the study is that the findings provide a basis for investigation of the advisability of making the 101-300 sequence a composition requirement for all University students rather than Liberal Arts and Sciences students only.

Relative to the conclusions of the study regarding the adequacy of the 101-300 sequence as teacher-training in composition is the implication that further examination of English curriculum requirements in meeting needs of Bradley students preparing to teach English in the secondary school is needed.

As the end of the decade approaches, no panaceas or instantly efficacious remedies for Johnny's illiteracy have yet been evolved. At the same time, voids in preparation of Johnny's English teacher still exist.

VI. SUMMARY

Results of the ETS Composition Test, findings of theme analyses, and data compiled from faculty questionnaires were implemented in evaluating the adequacy of the 101-300 sequence in preparing students to teach composition and the comparative effectiveness of the English 101-102 and 101-300 sequences in meeting needs of students throughout their four-year college program.

On the basis of findings of this study, the hypothesis that a six-hour composition requirement, if taken at the optimum time, is adequate preparation for students preparing to teach English in the secondary school does not appear valid.

Although the study shows that greater benefits and advantages are obtained from the 101-300 sequence than from the 101-102 sequence, the level of achievement in writing proficiency for students completing English 300 does not indicate that additional requirements are not needed to provide more than minimal qualifications for teaching composition in the secondary school.

VII. REFERENCES

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Appendix A

TEXTBOOKS

English 101

Muscatine, Charles, and Griffith, Marlene, eds. Borzoi College Reader. Shorter ed. New York: Alfred A. Knofp. 1968.

English 102

Altick, Richard. Preface to Critical Reading. New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc. 1963.

Beardsley, Monroe C. Thinking Straight. 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1966.

English 300

Bilsky, Manuel. Patterns of Logic. Rev. ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1963.

Connolly, Francis. Rhetoric Casebook. 2nd ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. 1959.

All courses

Hodges, John C., and Whitten, Mary E. Harbrace College Handbook. 6th ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. 1963.

Appendix B-1

FACULTY CRITIQUES OF ENGLISH 101-300

Desirability of continuing the 101-300 sequence

"The sequence should be continued provided that (a) 101 is revamped so that it resembles the present 102 and (b) class enrollment in both 101 and 300 be substantially reduced."

"Very desirable to continue the sequence. The students have been freed from the burdens of composition for two years. They aren't so resentful of writing as a required subject. They now have a few ideas to express and they enjoy writing more. They are more ambitious and mature. They respond to criticism more sensibly and quickly, and they are much more capable of writing a paper of some length and sustaining their work."

"Valuable to continue in the opinion of instructor and students. Even those students who might have failed 102 as freshmen profit more--perhaps because they are, as juniors, aware of the need to be able to express themselves well in writing and therefore apply themselves to the task of writing. The increased experience, knowledge, and maturity contribute to better writing."

"The students are unanimously for the sequence."

"More experience with the sequence is needed; it should be continued."

English 101-300 as teacher preparation

"A composition course of this kind is not as important as a methods course. A course in teaching rhetoric (such as English 500) would be valuable."

"The English-Education majors learn much from the teaching techniques of the instructor, particularly at the 300 level. I think 300 offers them more than at the 102 level because many 102 students are still fighting authority, convinced they know all the answers and that 102 is an imposition. The student does so much growing between the freshman and junior year, I feel he gains more from 300 composition because he wants to gain."

"English 101-300 is not designed as teacher preparation but to help the student become a more effective writer. A course is needed in grammar review, techniques of setting up assignments, and practice in grading themes."

Other comment on the 101-300 composition program

"One weakness of the sequence is the need to handle the research paper in 101 instead of 102. The end product is much weaker in 101 than in 102."

"I should like to see installed a course in the history of prose style, notably Karl Claus' Style in English Prose (MacMillan). Such a course would offer the student the two-fold opportunity of (a) further acquaintance with the nuances of prose style from Old English to contemporary writing, and (b) another perspective from which to view the course of English and American literature and language. If, by the time an English major completes a rigorous period of instruction in English 300, he still has not developed the ability of being intensely critical toward his own writing, then he ought to be encouraged to pursue another major. If, however, he has developed this ability, he should benefit from an advanced course."

Appendix C-1

STUDENT COMMENTS ON THE VALUE OF ENGLISH 300

"In freshman 102 you are still in the process of learning the form in which to express your ideas. Junior level composition is much more beneficial in that expression of ideas is foremost. You are finally able to apply what you have been absorbing."

"If the student takes two consecutive semesters of writing, he finds himself tiring of it; he's in a rut--finally to the point that he no longer cares."

"A junior or senior has had more significant experiences from which to draw material for intelligent and well-organized pieces of writing."

"The junior in college has more to say than the second-semester freshman. Consequently, the student in English 300 enjoys his English course more than a freshman who is forced to write about topics on which he has no thoughts or interest."

"English 300 has been very beneficial to me as a review of the basic grammatical principles and has also served as a means of evaluating my style of writing."

"A college freshman is too immature to do any kind of depth-writing. A junior has been exposed to different opinions, has developed opinions of his own, and also has had to dig for knowledge and ideas."

"My writing ability had grown very stale. English 300 was very worthwhile in giving new impetus to my writing and helping me handle essay tests in my upperclass years."

"I feel the course is of value because the student has developed an awareness of his needs for writing skills and the type of writing related to his field."

"It enables the student to review and regain writing ability he may have lost since his freshman year."

(From a student who had 101 and 102 and took 300 as an elective) "I gained considerably more from the 300 course than from 102. I remember only vaguely what was covered in 101-102 and my reactions to them are remote in my mind. Now I am more serious minded, searching for a place in life."